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ABSTRACT

A method for evaluating and improving the secondary school environment for limited-English-proficient students is presented. The first section outlines research findings about elements in the school context, curriculum, and staffing found effective in serving LEP students. Desirable factors in the school context include: valuing of students' languages and cultures; use and development of native languages in and out of the classroom; high expectations of LEP students; staff development explicitly designed for serving this population; encouragement of family involvement; and appropriate support services and extracurricular activities. An effective curriculum characteristic is its capacity to accommodate the heterogeneity of the population and its needs. Positive staff factors include: making LEP education a priority; knowledge and active support of LEP-oriented programs among all staff; counseling services designed for this population; and commitment to empowering LEP students. Two additional characteristics of effectiveness are the longevity and pervasiveness of the above school elements. A checklist for use in evaluating the secondary school for these and related features is presented. It details specific elements of effectiveness in the school environment, curriculum, and staff practice, provides a scale for rating them in the school in question, and contains spaces to note examples and ideas for improvement. (MSE)

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Applying Elements of Effective Secondary Schooling for Language Minority Students:

A Tool for Reflection and Stimulus to Change

Tamara Lucas

14

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INTRODUCTION

Over the years, secondary schooling for language minority (LM) students has received little attention either in research or in the literature on methods and curriculum (Faltis and Arias, 1992). Secondary programs and practices for LM students have apparently been based on the assumption that, like U.S.-born English speaking children, LM children enter U.S. schools at five or six years old and become fluent in academic as well as social uses of English in elementary school. While the majority of LM students have been and continue to be in the elementary grades, a sizable proportion of them are in secondary schools.

In fact, students enter U.S. schools at different ages with varying degrees of fluency and nonfluency in English and with all varieties of educational backgrounds. In the spring of 1991, in California, nearly one-third (31 percent) of the students considered limited English proficient (LEP) were secondary students (California State Department of Education, 1991).

As a result of the growing population of secondary LM students, more attention has been focused on this group in recent years. A study in California which examined programs and services for LEP students concentrated a sizable portion of its effort on looking at secondary schools (Minicucci and Olsen, 1991, 1992). The authors of the report paint a bleak picture of the quality of secondary programs for California's LEP students. They conclude that secondary LEP students are inadequately served because of:

- the diversity and complexity of their needs;
- a lack of support services to meet those needs;
- a shortage of trained teachers;
- inadequate assessment of students' native language and content area skills;
- a lack of cohesive, comprehensive program planning;
- insufficient offerings of content courses; and
- a lack of materials.

This study suggests that in California, at least, secondary programs for LEP students need overhauling. In the midst of this gloomy picture of secondary schooling for LM students, some bright spots have been identified (i.e., some secondary schools where many of the problems identified by Minicucci and Olsen have been overcome). Before describing some of the features of these schools, however, I want to preface my remarks by acknowledging that, despite these bright spots, despite "the good things that go on in adverse conditions" (Kozol, p. 51), many language minority students in this country do not have access to effective secondary education. Kozol warns us

not to be "consoled" by the bright spots. He reminds us that injustice, inequality, and segregation underly many of the educational problems in this country, despite the good teachers, challenging curricula, and supportive administrators that can be found in some schools. So while I present some hope, I acknowledge that what I describe is not typical, and that we cannot simply apply these features to schools and hope to solve all the problems.

The Good News: What We Know About Effective Schooling for Secondary Language Minority Students

The bright spots in secondary schooling for LM students to which I have referred and will describe in greater detail come from three studies that focused in whole or in part on successful secondary programs for LM students. The first study (which I will refer to as *the high school study*) examined six high schools in California and Arizona that were taking concrete steps to promote the academic success of Latino LM students (Lucas, Henze, and Donato, 1990). The second study (which I will refer to as *the SAIP [special alternative instructional programs] study*) identified and examined nine exemplary programs in six states, including seven secondary programs, where instruction was provided primarily through modified instructional approaches in English rather than in students' native languages (Tikunoff et al., 1991a and b). The third study (which I will refer to as *the capacity building study*) examined districts that had been successful at maintaining programs for LM students, including secondary programs, after having received federal funding from Title VII to provide such services (Kim and Lucas, 1991, 1992; Lucas, 1992b).

Taken together, these studies provide school, program, and district perspectives on ways to serve secondary LM students successfully and provide strategies to ensure that services are maintained. I will discuss briefly what the studies tell us with regard to the contexts of schooling, curriculum, staffing, and program longevity and pervasiveness, referring readers to other reports and publications that discuss these topics at greater length (see Henze and Donato (forthcoming) for an examination of instruction in secondary school classes for language minority students). I will then introduce a checklist that incorporates lessons learned from the studies and suggest a process whereby secondary school staffs can use the checklist to reflect upon the effectiveness of their own programs and practices for language minority students.

The school context: Beyond curriculum and instruction

While it is obvious that the formal curriculum, instructional practices, and staff expertise and attitudes directly influence students' experiences in school, the importance of the larger school context may be overlooked by practitioners who are fully engaged in the everyday activities of secondary schooling. In fact, contextual factors such as those discussed below are highly influential in the schooling of language minority students, as they are for all students (see McLaughlin and Talbert, 1990).

1. Value is placed on students' languages and cultures (Lucas, Henze, and Donato, 1990).

In a variety of concrete ways, staff in effective schools convey the message that students' languages and cultures are valued and respected. This value and respect goes deeper than the food and holiday celebrations that function as the only recognition of non-European cultures in many schools. Staff members learn about students' experiences in their native countries and in their communities in the United States, learn students' languages, encourage and support the development of native languages, offer content courses in students' native languages, and hire bilingual staff who share the students' cultural backgrounds. These acts and attitudes communicate to

students that they, themselves, are valued and respected; this, in turn, supports a more "additive" and "empowering" orientation to students' language and cultural backgrounds (Cummins, 1989).

2. The use and development of students' native languages are supported in a variety of ways inside and outside the classroom (Lucas and Katz, forthcoming, 1991).

This is a more specific manifestation of placing value on students' native languages. In visiting effective schools and programs, we have been struck by the many ways in which teachers, aides, and other staff facilitate the use and development of students' native languages—even in programs that provide formal instruction in English. Primary language support and development activities vary considerably across secondary schools with respect to their extent and methods of presentation. Schools may provide native language development through formal classes (e.g., Spanish for Spanish Speakers) and/or through other less formal means (e.g., the use of instructional aides, peer tutoring, or community resources). However, staff in effective schools find some means of supporting and promoting native language use and development. Figure 1 (from Lucas and Katz, 1991) shows some of the ways students' native languages were used in the nine exemplary programs featured in the SAIP study.

3. High expectations of language minority students are made concrete (Lucas, Henze, and Donato, 1990).

The importance of having high expectations of students has been recognized for some time, yet all too often minority students are given the message that less is expected of them than of "mainstream" students (Kozol, 1992; Oakes, 1985; Berman et al., 1992). In effective secondary schools, language minority students are expected to learn, and concrete steps are taken to challenge them and to support their learning. These schools hire minority staff who are role models, provide special programs to prepare students for college and offer them assistance in the application process, offer rigorous content courses including advanced and honors courses, bring in outside speakers to act as role models and to provide information about higher education and jobs, elicit parental support for higher education, and recognize students for doing well.

4. Staff development is explicitly designed to help teachers and other staff serve language minority students more effectively (Lucas, Henze, and Donato, 1990).

Few teachers are adequately prepared to work effectively with the linguistically and culturally diverse student populations that are becoming increasingly common across the country. For this reason, in-service staff development is given high priority in schools where language minority students are effectively served. Teacher education programs are notoriously behind the times with respect to the attention they give to strategies for teaching language minority students, so most new teachers have to learn such strategies through in-service training. In addition, experienced teachers who may be experts in the instruction of English speaking, European-American students are not necessarily effective instructors of language minority students, so they too must develop new approaches for working with new populations. Schools offer incentives and compensation to encourage staff to participate in staff development activities. They encourage all staff—not just those who work in "special" programs—to become knowledgeable and skillful in working with language minority students.

5. Families of language minority students are encouraged to become involved in their children's schooling (Lucas, Henze, and Donato, 1990).

Like high expectations, family involvement is recognized as an important component of schooling for all students. However, language minority parents are routinely left out of school activities for a number of reasons

Figure 1

Use of First Language (L1) by Students and Teachers
Across Nine Exemplary Special Alternative Instructional Programs.

SITES	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Students' use of L1									
To assist one another	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
To tutor other students								x	
To ask/answer questions	x	x	x	x		x		x	
To use bilingual dictionaries		x	x	x				x	
To write in L1	x	x		x	x	x		x	
To interact socially	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Teachers' use of L1									
To check comprehension	x	x				x		x	
To translate a lesson		x							
To explain an activity	x	x	x			x		x	
To provide instruction	x	x							
To interact socially	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	
L1 support in the larger school context									
Content instruction in L1	x	x		x			x		x
Instruction in L1 culture, history, and/or language arts	x	x		x		x	x		x
Library books in L1	x	x			x			x	x
Communication to parents in L1	x	x	x		x	x			
Parents encouraged to read to students in L1	x	x			x				

such as: the lack of an understanding of the role that family members are expected to play in schooling in the United States, the failure of the school to communicate to them in a language they understand, the lack of access to a person at the school who speaks their language, the scheduling of activities at times and places that are not convenient or accessible to them, and the lack of activities and information relevant to them and their children. Schools which are effective with LM students make it a priority to overcome obstacles to the participation of parents and actively encourage and facilitate parents' involvement in their children's schooling.

6. Support services and extracurricular activities are designed to serve and include language minority students (Lucas, Henze, and Donato, 1990).

Simply having a rigorous and well-planned academic program for LM students does not mean that they will all take advantage of it. Many LM students need special support in developing linguistic and academic skills, understanding the expectations of the school system, and developing a sense of belonging and inclusion within the school and the community. Effective secondary schools offer special programs to promote LM students' academic and social growth and adjustment. Academic support programs include peer tutoring, teacher/staff mentoring, career planning, multicultural awareness, and college preparation activities. Extracurricular activities that involve LM students include cultural groups whose members learn about and perform arts and ceremonies from different cultures (e.g., *baile folklorico* groups which perform dances from different regions of Mexico), bilingual student newspapers, international clubs, student organizations for specific ethnic groups (e.g., MECHA, *Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Atzlán*), and soccer teams.

Curriculum

7. The school's curriculum is designed to take into account the fact that language minority students are a heterogeneous group with varied needs (Lucas 1992a, 1993; Lucas, Henze, and Donato 1990).

Since language minority students constitute a heterogeneous group, an effective secondary school curriculum provides different means to meet their diverse needs. In designing curricula, educators in successful secondary schools keep diversity in mind and are especially vigilant to avoid relegating LM students to a narrow range of ESL and "basic" content classes. Our work suggests that LM students are more likely to achieve when a school's curriculum offers variety in three areas:

(a) the skills, abilities, and knowledge which classes are designed to develop (i.e., native language development, ESL, and content);

(b) the degrees of difficulty and sophistication among available classes (i.e., advanced as well as low-level courses); and

(c) the approaches to teaching content (i.e., native language instruction, content ESL, and specially designed instruction in English).

Schools that successfully address LM students' academic needs provide formal means through which LM students can develop their abilities in English and their native languages and skills and knowledge in different content areas. Especially at the secondary level, students do not have the time to postpone studying content while they concentrate only on learning English. To prepare for jobs and for further education, they must develop content knowledge and critical thinking skills as well as English language abilities. Strong native language abilities can also serve them well in their future careers and education, can promote their English learning (Cummins, 1981), and support their development of a positive image of themselves and their cultures.

The 1991-92 curriculum at an Illinois high school, presented in Figure 2, reflects the multiple skills development that we have seen throughout our research on effective secondary schools. At this school, the curriculum consisted of:

- content classes in Spanish and in Lao;
- content classes taught through modified (ESL) approaches;
- native language development classes for Spanish speakers;
- ESL; and
- other language development classes.

To accommodate the two largest language groups in the school, all classes required for graduation at the high school were offered in Spanish and Lao, although not every class was offered every year. The particular classes offered each semester were those which the largest number of students needed and signed up for, so the course offerings were different each semester.

Successful secondary schools also offer variety in the degree of difficulty and sophistication among available classes. The curriculum presented in Figure 2 illustrates this type of variety as well. Spanish speaking students, for example, can take mathematics or geometry, general science or chemistry, developmental English or sophomore English for LM students, and reading skills development in Spanish or Spanish literature. LM students are not trapped in low-level or "basic" courses, but have access to advanced classes as well. Some high schools also offer advanced placement or honors classes for LM students in various subject areas—either in English or in students' native languages.

Finally, successful secondary school curricula offer variety in approaches to teaching content. Students with little or no proficiency in English must have native language classes in order to have access to content while those with intermediate proficiency in English can benefit from classes taught through modified approaches in English. When a school has qualified staff, offering content courses in students' native languages can provide access to the curriculum for students with little English ability and allow students who do have some English ability the option of studying in their native language. In order for native language courses to be appropriate and effective, three conditions must exist: (1) students must be literate in their L1 and have some academic background; (2) teachers who can teach such courses must be available; and (3) there must be large enough numbers of students from a given language group to make it feasible to offer courses in that language.

Although these conditions do exist in some schools and for some groups of students, many secondary schools have students with little previous schooling, students who speak several different native languages, and no qualified teachers to teach in the students' native languages. Content classes taught through modified instructional approaches in English by teachers who have received training in those approaches can offer some access to the curriculum for LEP students with some proficiency in English. If more of these courses had been offered at the high school represented in Figure 2, for example, students who did not speak Lao or Spanish would certainly have had more classes to choose from.

Staff Features

Schools are made up of the people who inhabit them. No school will successfully educate the students who attend it unless key instructional, support, and administrative staff members are committed to and participate in the programs and services designed to educate students. Ultimately, educational "quality is the hard won result of dedicated work by competent, committed people" (Wilson and Corcoran, 1988, p. 146).

Figure 2

Course Offerings at an Illinois High School, Fall 1991.

Course	*Lao Bilingual*	*Spanish Bilingual*	*ESL Approach*
Content			
Mathematics	x	x	
Combination Pre-Algebra and Algebra	x		
Pre-Algebra		x	
Algebra		x	
Geometry 1-2	x	x	
General Science	x	x	
Health	x	x	
Biology	x	x	
Chemistry		x	
Civics	x	x	
Economics	x	x	
U.S. History	x	x	x
World History		x	
World Geography		x	
Reading		x	
Career Planning		x	
Drafting		x	x
Machine Shop			x
Typing			x
Home Economics			x
Study Skills			x
Native Language Development			
Spanish for Spanish Speakers Reading		x	
Spanish for Spanish Speakers Literature		x	
English Language Development			
ESL I, II, and III			x
Freshman English			x
Sophomore English			x
Reading Skills			x
Writing Skills			x
Composition			x
Developmental English			x

Without the tradition and clear legal support upon which "mainstream" educational approaches are based, programs and services which are considered "special," such as those for LM students, are especially dependent upon staff commitment for their existence and maintenance. Staff members in successful schools show through their actions that they sincerely believe in the programs and services provided to LM students and want to do what they can to ensure that LM students succeed.

Certainly, the features presented here grow out of staff members' commitment and advocacy. It is people, after all, who place value on students' languages and cultures; devise ways to incorporate students' native languages in schooling; hold high expectations of students; design, promote, and attend staff development activities; encourage families to participate in schooling; design and provide support services and extracurricular activities; and design and implement curricula.

We have found some other actions, attitudes, and characteristics that are even more directly related to the people who staff secondary schools. While these staff features are not unique to secondary schools, they are especially salient in successful schools and programs for secondary LM students (Lucas, Henze, and Donato, 1990; Lucas, 1993, 1992c).

8. School leaders make the education of language minority students a priority.

Through their acts and attitudes, school administrators and others in leadership roles show that the education of LM students is a priority. They do not treat it as a peripheral concern to be addressed by a small subgroup of "special" faculty members. These leaders recruit and hire language minority staff members, encourage and support the establishment of courses and services for LM students, are knowledgeable about effective educational approaches for LM students, learn about the communities their students represent, and advocate for LM students in the school and the community.

9. School administrators and staff who are not formally part of special programs for language minority students actively support programs and services for those students.

Traditionally, "special" programs—especially those seen as remedial—remain peripheral to the school as a whole. The staff in these programs do not participate as fully in school activities or decision making as do staff in "regular" programs, so the concerns and needs of the students in those programs are less likely to be central to school planning and decisions. In secondary schools in which effective programs for LM students thrive, staff members outside the programs see them as necessary and effective and take actions to support them. Principals show their support through such actions as promoting staff development focused on LM students, including issues relevant to LM students on meeting agendas, working with district bilingual staff, and finding ways to bring LM students' family members to the school. Other school staff show their support by seeking staff development to make them more knowledgeable and effective with LM students in their classes, attending activities sponsored by LM groups in the school and community, and acting as "cheerleaders" for the program in the school and the larger community.

10. All school staff are knowledegeable of various aspects of education for language minority students.

As a result of recruitment, hiring, and staff development practices, secondary schools which are effective with LM students are staffed by people who are knowledgeable of key factors in and strategies for educating LM students. Mainstream staff as well as those who work in ESL and bilingual programs have knowledge, experience, and expertise that have prepared them to work with LM students. The schools provide frequent opportunities for staff to enrich their knowledge and expertise.

11. Counselors give special attention to language minority students.

At the secondary level, counselors have a very important influence on students' present and future lives, playing crucial "gatekeeping" roles. Counselors place students in classes that can ultimately prepare them for a first-rate university, a community college, vocational training, or semi/unskilled labor. Effective secondary schools provide counselors who understand the complex factors influencing LM students' behavior and learning and can communicate effectively with them. They can speak students' native languages or can ensure that someone facilitates their communication with students who are not fluent in English. They are knowledgeable about students' cultural values and experiences and of issues in cross cultural communication and counseling. LM students in these schools have access to counselors with these skills and knowledge rather than being randomly assigned to those who do not.

12. School staff members share a strong commitment to empowering language minority students through education.

In effective schools, not only are staff members committed to providing rigorous and varied academic programs and appropriate support for LM students, they also show a commitment to promoting and supporting the full participation of LM students and their communities in school and beyond. They put in many extra hours and participate in activities over and above what their jobs call for. The ESL curriculum specialist in one district, for example, was described as doing "three people's work." This commitment is manifested in other ways as well. For example, staff give extra time and energy to work with LM students at school, sponsor extracurricular activities which actively involve LM students (e.g., newspapers in students' native languages, newspapers focusing on their communities, student clubs, sports in which they are likely to participate, and cultural groups), become active in community groups, and seek local political offices.

13. School staff members actively promote programs and services for language minority students.

In order to get the support of school, district, and community members who are not directly involved in the education of LM students, advocates for programs and services for LM students must keep those people informed. They use various strategies for getting the word out about program features and services offered, emphasizing student, staff, and program successes as well as continuing needs. A curriculum specialist described some of the ways staff members promote one program:

> We communicate by phone, face to face, in memos, in meetings, in passing informally, at Chamber of Commerce meetings, at professional organizations of various sorts. . .Give us a box to stand on and we'll talk to them. . .We let people know we're professionals.

School staff promote programs and services in the larger school and in the community. They act as advocates for the students and the language minority communities. Often a few individuals are especially active in their advocacy, but in effective schools there is a critical mass of such people.

Longevity and Pervasiveness of Effective Features

14. Longevity: the elements of effective schooling for language minority students are present throughout the time that they are in the secondary school.

15. Pervasiveness: the elements of effective schooling for language minority students are present across all of the educational experiences of the students in the secondary school.

Providing effective education for secondary LM students involves more than just adapting and applying the features of effective secondary schools identified in research. In (re)designing secondary schools to serve LM students, we also need to consider the longevity and pervasiveness of the elements of effective secondary schooling (Lucas, 1992a). That is, we need to ask: (1) For how long are the elements of effective schooling present in the educational experiences of LM students? Do these elements have longevity? and (2) To what extent do the elements of effective schooling apply across all of the educational experiences of LM students at any point in time? Are they pervasive?

For example, if you followed a particular LM student throughout his or her four years of high school, would that student's schooling be characterized by the features described herein and in the literature on effective secondary schooling for LM students during all four years? Or would the student be placed in a "special" program with many of these features for a year or two and then be "mainstreamed" without further attention to his or her language minority status? Similarly, if you took a cross-section of a particular LM student's educational experiences at a point in time (say, for one week), would all of those experiences be characterized by the elements of effective schooling for LM students? Or would the student be participating in appropriate and effective activities and classes for only a portion of his or her day—for example, in ESL and social studies classes and during MECHA meetings?

The elements of effective schooling for LM students may or may not be present throughout the time of LM students' secondary schooling (e.g., for all four years of high school), and they may or may not be present in all of the educational experiences of LM students at any one point in time. Figures 3 and 4 illustrate the variations in longevity and pervasiveness of elements of effective schooling in the educational experiences of LM students.

A Tool and Process for School Reflection

Knowing some of the features of effective secondary schooling for LM students is only a first step in ensuring that a school is effectively educating the students. School personnel need to find ways to apply those features. One way for secondary school staffs to ensure that they are meeting the needs of LM students is to establish goals (that is, to decide what they aspire to), to examine what they are doing, and then to adjust what they are doing to meet their goals. The checklist presented at the end of this monograph models a systematic tool for secondary school staffs to use in reflecting upon and improving the extent to which their schools incorporate the features of context, curriculum, staffing, longevity, and pervasiveness presented earlier.[1]

In effect, the features listed in the first column of the checklist are the goals that a secondary school with language minority students should aspire to. The scale in the second column of the checklist asks people to rate the degree to which each feature is present in their school, from 1 (*not present*) to 5 (*very present*). The third column provides a space to include examples which illustrate each feature. Finally, the fourth column in the checklist elicits ideas for improvement with regard to each feature.

This checklist can be most productive if school staff use it as a tool to elicit reflection and discussion rather than simply as a form to fill out. In order to rate the degree to which the features are present, to give examples of the features, and to come up with ideas for improvement, people must reflect on what they mean by each feature and how it relates to their specific school context. Thus, the rating scale, the examples, and the ideas for

Figure 3

Longevity of Elements of Effective Schooling for Language Minority Students.

For how long are the elements of effective schooling present in the educational experiences of language minority students?

(A)

Effective elements are not present in LM students' secondary schooling.

(– Longevity)

(B)

Effective elements are temporary (e.g., a special program which incorporates the elements precedes other educational experiences for LM students which do not incorporate the elements.).

(– Longevity)

(C)

Effective elements are present throughout the time of LM students' secondary schooling (e.g., for all four years of high school).

(+ Longevity)

Figure 4

Pervasiveness of Elements of Effective Schooling for Language Minority Students.

To what extent do the elements of effective schooling apply across all of the educational experiences of LM students at any point in time?

(A)

Effective elements are not present in the educational experience of LM students.

(– Pervasiveness)

(B)

Effective elements are present in some of the educational experiences of LM students (e.g., in a special program which coexists with other courses and programs).

(– Pervasiveness)

(C)

Effective elements are present throughout all of the educational experiences of LM students.

(+ Pervasiveness)

improvement can stimulate lively and in-depth discussion among colleagues about the current situation in their schools and departments as well as creative approaches to providing more effective schooling for LM students.

Discussion of the issues raised in the checklist can be incorporated into departmental meetings, faculty meetings, and/or staff development activities. The most productive way to use this tool varies depending upon the context, organization, staffing, and student population of each school. One approach is to have the staff examine and reflect on the checklist individually before meeting with others. Depending upon the time available, people can decide to discuss parts of the checklist (e.g., the features related to context) at different times rather than trying to consider it all at once.

After having time to think about the features included in the checklist, staff members can come together in groups to share reflections and examples and discuss ideas for improvement. This activity uncovers areas in which people have different perceptions and experiences and has been a very successful staff development activity. The composition of the groups that discuss the checklist can vary. It is helpful to have members of the same department use the checklist as a focus for reflection and discussion. To be most far-reaching, however, the process should then bring together people from different departments and different roles (e.g., counselors, administrators, teachers, instructional assistants) to discuss the features as they relate to the whole school.

Finally, the staff should follow up discussion of the checklist with plans for future actions. In different groupings, they can decide what steps to take to try to promote the development of features that are not present or are present to small degrees. This can help both departments and the whole school to focus efforts for a period of time rather than trying to do too many things at once.

Conclusion

Although we do not have answers to all of the questions posed by secondary educators of LM students, we do now have some ideas about features of effective secondary schooling for LM students. To implement positive changes, people directly involved in schooling must work together, setting realistic goals and devising strategies for reaching those goals that make sense within their particular contexts. The checklist presented here can provide a starting point for secondary school staffs to reflect upon and discuss how well their schools are currently serving LM students and how they can be changed to improve their effectiveness.

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[1] I want to thank Chuck Acosta, Bilingual Coordinator, Los Angeles County Office of Education. He first devised a scale to use with the eight features reported in the study of six high schools (Lucas, Henze, and Donato, 1990) and gave me the idea to develop a checklist of effective features of secondary schools for LM students to use in staff development.

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CHECKLIST

Does your secondary school incorporate effective elements of schools for language minority (LM) students?

Effective Elements	Degree to which the element is present					Examples to illustrate presence	Ideas for improvement
	not present 1	2	3	4	very present 5		
A. THE SCHOOL CONTEXT							
1. Value is placed on the students' languages and cultures. *School staff:*							
(a) Learn about students' cultures.							
(b) Learn students' languages.							
(c) Hire bilingual staff with cultural backgrounds similar to those of the students.							
(d) Encourage students to develop their primary language skills.							
(e) Allow students to speak their primary languages.							
(f) Offer advanced as well as lower division content courses in the students' primary languages.							
(g) Institute extracurricular activities that will attract LM students.							
(h) Other.							

(Checklist, continued)

Effective Elements	Degree to which the element is present					Examples to illustrate presence	Ideas for improvement
	not present 1	2	3	4	very present 5		
A. THE SCHOOL CONTEXT *(continued)*							
2. The use and development of students' native languages are supported in a variety of ways.							
(a) Students use their native language to:							
(1) assist one another inside and outside class							
(2) tutor other students							
(3) write for class assignments							
(4) interact socially							
(5) other							
(b) Teachers and instructional aides use students' native languages to:							
(1) check comprehension							
(2) explain activities							
(3) provide instruction							
(4) interact socially with students							
(5) other							
(c) In the larger school context:							
(1) Administrators use students' native languages							
(2) Library books are provided in students' native languages							
(3) Parents receive communication in their native languages (e.g., letters, phone calls, forms to fill out)							
(4) Other							

(Checklist, continued)

Effective Elements	Degree to which the element is present					Examples to illustrate presence	Ideas for improvement
	not present 1	2	3	4	very present 5		
A. THE SCHOOL CONTEXT *(continued)*							
3. High expectations of language minority students are made concrete. *Schools:*							
(a) Hire minority staff in leadership positions to act as role models.							
(b) Provide a special program to prepare LM students for college.							
(c) Offer advanced and honors bilingual/ English language content classes.							
(d) Provide counseling assistance (in the primary language if necessary) to help students apply to college and fill out scholarship and grant forms.							
(e) Bring in representatives of colleges and minority graduates who are in college to talk to students.							
(f) Work with parents to gain their support for students going to college.							
(g) Recognize students for doing well.							
(h) Other.							

(Checklist, continued)

Effective Elements	Degree to which the element is present					Examples to illustrate presence	Ideas for improvement
	not present 1	2	3	4	very present 5		
A. THE SCHOOL CONTEXT *(continued)*							
4. Staff development is explicitly designed to help teachers and other staff serve LM students more effectively. *Schools and school districts:*							
(a) Offer incentives and compensation so that school staff will take advantage of available staff development programs.							
(b) Encourage all staff to participate in staff development focused on LM students.							
(c) Provide staff development for teachers and other staff in:							
(1) effective instructional approaches to teaching LM students							
(2) principles of second language acquisition							
(3) the cultural backgrounds and experiences of the students							
(4) the languages of the students							
(5) cross-cultural communication							
(d) Other.							

(Checklist, continued)

Effective Elements	Degree to which the element is present					Examples to illustrate presence	Ideas for improvement
	not present 1	2	3	4	very present 5		
A. THE SCHOOL CONTEXT *(continued)*							
5. Families of LM students are encouraged to become involved in their children's schooling. *Schools provide and encourage:*							
(a) Staff who can speak the parents' languages.							
(b) On-campus ESL classes for parents.							
(c) Monthly parent nights.							
(d) Parent involvement with counselors in the planning of their children's course schedules.							
(e) Neighborhood meetings with school staff and parents.							
(f) Early morning and/or late night meetings with school staff and parents.							
(g) Telephone contacts to check on absent students.							
(h) Potlucks.							
(i) Other.							
6. Support services and extracurricular activities serve and include language minority students. *These include:*							
(a) Peer tutoring.							
(b) Teacher / staff mentoring.							

(Checklist, continued)

Effective Elements	Degree to which the element is present					Examples to illustrate presence	Ideas for improvement
	not present 1	2	3	4	very present 5		
A. THE SCHOOL CONTEXT *(continued)*							
6. Support services and extracurricular activities. *(continued)*							
(c) Career planning.							
(d) College preparation activities.							
(e) Multicultural awareness activities.							
(f) International clubs.							
(g) Cultural/ethnic groups.							
(h) Sports teams.							
(i) Other.							
B. CURRICULUM							
7. The school's curriculum is designed to take into account the fact that language minority students are heterogeneous and have varied needs. *It offers:*							
(a) Native language development classes (e.g., Spanish for Spanish speakers literature).							
(b) ESL classes.							
(c) Content classes in English.							
(d) Content classes in students' native languages.							
(e) More advanced content classes designed for LM students (e.g., calculus, government, physics).							

(Checklist, continued)

Effective Elements	Degree to which the element is present					Examples to illustrate presence	Ideas for improvement
	not present 1	2	3	4	very present 5		
B. CURRICULUM *(continued)*							
7. The school's curriculum *(continued)*							
(f) Less advanced content classes designed for LM students, as needed.							
(g) AP and/or Honors classes for LM students.							
(h) International clubs.							
(i) Cultural/ethnic groups.							
(j) Sports teams.							
(k) Other.							
C. STAFF FEATURES							
8. School leaders make the education of language minority students a priority. *They:*							
(a) Hire teachers who are bilingual and/or trained in methods for teaching LM students.							
(b) Learn about the communities the school's students represent.							
(c) Are knowledgeable of instructional and curricular approaches to teaching LM students and communicate this knowledge to staff.							
(d) Take a strong leadership role in strengthening curriculum and instruction for all students, including LM students.							
(e) Are bilingual minority group members themselves.							
(f) Advocate for LM students in the school and community.							
(g) Other.							

(Checklist, continued)

Effective Elements	Degree to which the element is present					Examples to illustrate presence	Ideas for improvement
	not present 1	2	3	4	very present 5		
C. STAFF FEATURES *(continued)*							
9. Administrators and other staff who are not formally part of special programs for LM students actively support such programs and services. *They:*							
(a) Promote and seek staff development focused on LM students.							
(b) Include issues relevant to LM students on meeting agendas.							
(c) Work with district bilingual/ESL staff.							
(d) Attend activities sponsored by LM groups in the school and community.							
(e) Speak up in favor of programs and services in various forums.							
(f) Other.							
10. All staff are knowledgeable of various aspects of education for LM students.							
(a) Staff development on LM issues is provided and encouraged for mainstream as well as bilingual/ ESL staff.							
(b) Language development strategies are incorporated into content area courses across the curriculum.							
(c) Staff in all role groups participate in staff development on LM issues (administrators, teachers, instructional aides, counselors, and others).							
(d) Staff in all role groups, departments, and programs see the education of LM students as part of their responsibility.							
(e) Other.							

(Checklist, continued)

Effective Elements	Degree to which the element is present					Examples to illustrate presence	Ideas for improvement
	not present 1	2	3	4	very present 5		
C. STAFF FEATURES *(continued)*							
11. Counselors give special attention to LM students. *They:*							
(a) Speak the students' languages.							
(b) Are of the same or similar cultural backgrounds.							
(c) Are informed about postsecondary educational opportunities for LM students.							
(d) Believe in, emphasize, and monitor the academic success of LM students.							
(e) Are available to the students who most need their services.							
(f) Other							
12. School staff members share a strong commitment to empowering language minority students through education. *They:*							
(a) Give extra time to work with LM students.							
(b) Actively challenge the inequality of the social and political status quo.							
(c) Reach out to students in ways that go beyond their job requirements, for example, by sponsoring extracurricular activities.							
(d) Participate in community activities in which they act as advocates for LM students.							
(e) Other.							

(Checklist, continued)

Effective Elements	Degree to which the element is present					Examples to illustrate presence	Ideas for improvement
	not present 1	2	3	4	very present 5		
C. STAFF FEATURES *(continued)*							
13. School staff members actively promote programs and services for LM students. *They:*							
(a) Attend school, district, and community meetings to provide information about LM students, programs, and services.							
(b) Bring up LM student issues and needs in formal and informal discussions with colleagues.							
(c) Seek opportunities to discuss LM student issues and needs with the local press.							
(d) Highlight student successes in a variety of forums (at meetings, in newsletters, in newspapers).							
(e) Actively seek collaboration with other district and community agencies to provide services to LM students.							
(f) Sponsor cultural events for public attendance.							
(g) Other.							
D. LONGEVITY & PERVASIVENESS OF EFFECTIVE FEATURES							
14. The elements of effective schooling for LM students are present throughout the time they are in the secondary school.							
15. The elements of effective schooling for LM students are present across all of the educational experiences of LM students in the secondary school.							

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About the Author

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Applying Effective Elements of Secondary Schooling for Language Minority Students

In the past few years, the growing population of language minority (LM) students in secondary schools has received increasing attention as schools and districts seek ways to ensure that these students have access to effective education programs that address their unique needs. Secondary LM students come from diverse backgrounds with regard to culture and prior formal education experience, and enter American schools with varying degrees of fluency in both English and their native language(s).

Applying effective elements of secondary schooling for language minority students examines the many factors that impact on the educational experiences of secondary LM students. The monograph includes an extensive checklist that teachers, program directors, and school administrators can use to evaluate and enhance their own education programs to ensure that secondary LM students receive effective, meaningful educational experiences.

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